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Report of immigrants inspected at the port of Ponce, P. R., during the month of August, 1902.

Total number of immigrants inspected, 46; number passed, 46.

W. W. KING,
Assistant Surgeon.

The SURGEON-GENERAL.

RUSSIA.

Anthrax in Odessa, and Aksai, Astrakhan.

ODESSA, RUSSIA, August 14, 1902.

SIR: I have the honor herewith to transmit 2 translations relating to the existence of anthrax at Astrakhan and Odessa. Said translations are from official documents or sources. Cases of anthrax in human beings are not very numerous, as far as I have followed the disease. That 16 deaths should have taken place at the village of Aksai, in the province of Astrakhan, is a serious matter, and I have felt it my duty to send the information to the Department for the reason, among others, that the province of Astrakhan is the source of supply of much that is shipped to the United States via Baltic ports. Hides of all kinds, hair, wool, and skins are sent to the United States from all of the Russian provinces bordering on the Volga. Wool in the grease is also sent to Rostoff, on the Don, to be washed, and this is also forwarded to the United States. Since the recent order of the Treasury Department relating to the disinfection of hides, unless these hides are either dry salted or arsenic cured, no shipments of hides have taken place from this port for the United States. I notice by the declared exports, however, that hides, calfskins, etc., are being shipped in large quantities from Moscow, St. Petersburg, Riga, and Libau. Shippers inform me that calfskins which are shipped in large quantities from the Baltic ports to Russia are never either dry salted or arsenic cured. From the same source I am still further informed that calfskins are always air dried in Russia, and that to attempt to comply with the Treasury requirements for disinfection would render these calfskins worthless for the trade. I have learned recently that calfskins destined for the United States have been shipped via Hamburg and disinfected at that place. The method of disinfection should be the same at all places, and yet the shippers here absolutely refuse to comply with the Treasury regulations as I understand them. It is pretty openly hinted that no consul in Russia requires the same method that I do. I have given shippers translations in 3 languages of the methods required and copies of the letters from the Secretary of Agriculture relating to calfskins. It is admitted that these instructions require all that I ask to be done, and yet the shippers decline to comply, and without doubt manage to send their goods into the United States. I may add that the same parties ship from Black Sea and Baltic ports. Would I be asking too much from the Department if I suggested the propriety of an investigation to ascertain whether or by what means our customs officials are able to find out how these hides are disinfected, or whether they are disinfected at all? * * * The various methods of disinfection required by our regulations have for their object, as I understand the matter, the destruction of dangerous germs; if the object of disinfection is the preservation of the hides, etc., then the Russian method of treating calfskins answers the purpose, because they are quite